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Rohan Gunaratna · C. Nna-Emeka Okereke  
Editors

# Palgrave Handbook of Terrorism in Africa

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*This book is dedicated to all victims of terrorism in Africa and the wider world. By this, we refer to all that have lost their lives and suffered various forms of injuries from acts of terrorism including their relatives and persons providing supports to victims of terrorism. We also dedicate this book to all individuals engaged in the fight against terrorism including those that have paid the ultimate price. Together, we shall work individual and in concert to exorcise the scourge of terrorism and make the world a safer place to live.*

## FOREWORD

*The Palgrave Handbook of Terrorism in Africa* by Dr. Rohan Gunaratna and Dr. Emeka Okereke is a first time collaboration by two well-known terrorism experts. Dr. Gunaratna, whom I have known since 9/11, was one of the first credible post 9/11 al Qaeda researchers whose assessments were highly sought after by the United States and its allies as they formed their al Qaeda response. Along with Dr. Bruce Hoffman, Dr. Gunaratna was one of the first Senior Fellows at the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, which I had the honour to establish (with General Wayne Downing) and Direct from 2002–2005. Dr. Okereke is a well-known and respected terrorism and counterterrorism expert whose two decades of specialised training, research and related engagement in terrorism studies in Africa and policy advisory roles makes him the ideal co-author of this book. The authors' goal for the book is to contribute towards broader understanding of the challenge of terrorism in Africa as building blocks to effective counterterrorism interventions.

This book assembles twenty-one country-specific Africa case studies and five regional Africa case studies as well as a chapter on trends and prognosis of terrorism in the continent, all written by African counterterrorism studies specialists. Their collective analysis confirms that nascent terrorist threats and operations in Africa originating in the late nineties in Algeria have steadily increased to consume approximately a third of the African continent. In the 90s The Armed Islamic Groups (GIA) and its spin off organisation, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat

(GSPC), which later evolved into Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) were the major violent extremist groups that threatened Algeria and its North African neighbours. In East Africa, and a precursor to 9/11, Al Qaeda attacked the embassies of the United States in Nairobi (Kenya) and Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) on the seventh of August 1998 leading to the death of 224 persons including 12 Americans. These 90s terrorist events pale in comparison to the terrorist threat environment in Africa today. The 90s events were committed by Al Qaeda and its associated terrorists whose followings and areas of operation were relatively limited.

## MAJOR TERRORIST GROUPS IN AFRICA

The key deductions from the book indicate that the African continent faces more than eighteen active terrorist groups whose collective operations occur in fourteen African countries with another half dozen countries at risk. The major groups perpetrating act of terrorism in Africa include but not restricted to the Al Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram, and the Islamic State. Yet, there exists other smaller terrorist groups operating across Africa, several other smaller Islamist affiliated terrorist groups operate in Mozambique, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Kenya. A tacit account on these groups is presented below.

### *Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)*

The early GIA and GSPC evolved into AQIM which now initially operated across North Africa and subsequently in West Africa. A subsidiary of AQIM, Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), along with its four subsidiaries (Ansar Dine, Macina Liberation Front (FLM), Al-Mourabitoun, and the Sahara Emirate of AQIM), is actively engaged in operations in Algeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Cote d'Ivoire.

### *Boko Haram*

Boko Haram, which was a little noticed group of extremists in North-east Nigeria in 2000 gradually emerged a major terrorist organisation and national security threat not only in Nigeria, but also in Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. The group's personnel strength and military capabilities enable it to confront major state military organisations and formations successfully on the battlefield in the post-Arab Spring era.

### *Al Shabaab Al Mujahidin*

In East Africa, al Shabaab continues to operate in Somalia despite having been confronted by the militaries of Ethiopia, United States, and Kenya including the multiple counter al Shabaab deployments by the United Nations backed forces of the African Union known as the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Despite some recent AMISOM and US military successes, including US air interdiction strikes against high value targets of Al Shabaab leadership, the terror group continues to pose a threat to not only Somalia but to the entire East and Horn of Africa region, particularly to Kenya and to Ethiopia where al Shabaab terrorists operated briefly in 2022.

### *The Islamic State*

The Islamic State (IS) is a relative newcomer to terrorist attacks in Africa following the group's emergence in Iraq and Syria in 2014. Although the activities of the IS may have been defeated in Iraq and Syria where it originated, the organisation has however expanded its influence in Africa through large-scale operations, particularly in areas where government control is limited.<sup>1</sup> The group remains active and visible in Libya, Sinai, Somalia, West Africa, and the Greater Sahara where the organisation seek to establish caliphate. Beyond these countries, the IS affiliates have further infiltrated other African countries especially Mozambique where it executes operations in the Cabo Delgado region as well as South Africa which has become IS financial clearing house.<sup>2</sup>

### *Lord's Resistance Army*

The "Lord's Resistance Army" (LRA), a pseudo-Christian based terrorist group that has operated in remote areas in northern Uganda, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one outlier, that their activities have not been heard much in

<sup>1</sup> United States Department of States, "Designation of ISIS Organisers and Financial Facilitators based in South Africa" 1 March 2022, <https://www.state.gov/designation-of-isis-organizers-and-financial-facilitators-based-in-south-africa/> (accessed 30 June 2023).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

the past few years as sustained counterterrorism offensives and the emergence of the Islamic State in Central Africa Province (ISCAP) seems to have dwarfed its existence. Recent reports indicate that the LRA is now a much smaller organisation and operates almost exclusively in the Central Africa Republic. Joseph Kony, the LRA's quixotic leader has been on many countries' "most wanted" lists for two decades. However, sometimes referred to as "the one who got away," he is yet to be captured or confirmed dead.<sup>3</sup>

## WHY TERRORIST GROUPS HAVE SUCCEEDED IN AFRICA

There exists a consensus of opinion among the authors and chapter contributors that the past twenty years have witnessed a dramatic increase in terrorist groups in Africa. The Al Qaeda and Islamic State which escaped defeats in the Middle East shifted their theatres of operation to Africa where they continue to reed havoc on the continent. In addition, previously small and locally organised terrorist groups such as Boko Haram and Al Shabaab, who respectively conducted operations in Nigeria and Somalia, are now capable of conducting out of area operations against regular military formations. Yet, despite the sometimes successful military interventions by the US, France, Ethiopia, and UN forces in vulnerable and threatened theatres within Africa, terrorist groups on the continent continue to expand their influence and territory.

Perhaps the most important feature of the *Palgrave Handbook of Terrorism in Africa* is the consensus among the authors and chapter contributors about the reasons for the increases in terrorist groups and operations on the African continent. Among the most frequently noted reasons are porous borders, ungoverned areas, corruption, lack of basic services, poverty and youth bulge, and unconstitutional changes in government to name a few.

<sup>3</sup> Global Centre for Responsibility to Protect, "Central Africa" (The Lord's Resistance Army) 2 April 2022, <https://www.globalr2p.org/countries/central-africa-the-lords-resistance-army/> (accessed 30 June 20223).

### *Porous Borders*

The porous nature of Africa's borders, which owes their origin to the way colonialists carved up the African continent as well as the effects of border management by post-colonial African states, has become a serious issue for African governments facing terrorist threats. Porous borders enable fighters, weapons, to easily flow across countries and between regions in Africa.<sup>4</sup> In addition to easier movement of fighters and weapons, the persistence of porous borders also facilitates illicit cross-border trafficking such as human and commodities trafficking provide funding that fuels terrorism.<sup>5</sup>

### *Ungoverned Spaces*

Several of the book's authors note that for two reasons "ungoverned spaces," which are large areas of territory where formal governments have little influence or presence, are contributing factors to terrorist activity. First, ungoverned spaces provide safe havens for terrorists to operate. Second, without governance, services such as law enforcement, health-care, and other social welfare services are lacking or not available at all. In the absence of government-led welfare services, terrorist organisations often fill the vacuum and provide the services governments do not.<sup>6</sup> The implication is that several citizens sometimes tend to switch loyalty and allegiance away from the state in support of the terrorist organisations providing the services.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, "Speakers warn Security Council Terrorism Spreading across Africa at Alarming Rate, Calls for Greater Support, Enhanced International, Regional Cooperation" at 9296th Meeting, SC/15245, 28 March 2023. <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15245.doc.htm#:~:text=situation%20in%20Africa.-,Despair%2C%20poverty%2C%20hunger%2C%20lack%20of%20basic%20services%2C%20unemployment,terrorist%20groups%20across%20the%20continent> (accessed 30 June 2023).

<sup>5</sup> Fidel Amakye Owusu, "Africa's Porous Borders Promote Transnational Crimes Rather than Deeper Integration" NE Global, 16 March 2023, <https://www.neglobal.eu/africas-porous-borders-promote-transnational-crimes-rather-than-deeper-integration/> (accessed 30 June 2023).

<sup>6</sup> Mitch Downey, "Did the War on Terror Deter Ungoverned Spaces? Not in Africa" *Journal of Development Economics*, Volume 151, June 2021, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0304387821000274> (accessed 30 June 2023).

### *Corruption*

Corruption is pervasive on the African continent. Several types of corruption combine to exacerbate citizen distrust in government which prompts many to find a governance alternative by joining and working for a terrorist group. Many of the book chapters identified various manifestation of corruption which include bribery, patronage, nepotism and cronyism, and electoral fraud. Yet, although corruption is not unique to Africa, African corruption remains pervasive and among the world's most severe. This assertion is authenticated by the data from Transparency International which indicate that six African countries are rated as "extremely corrupt" (scores under 20) and another 35 are considered "very corrupt" (scores 20–39); only Botswana emerges as a member of the "slightly corrupt" group, and no African country is among the "least corrupt" group which includes most of the economically advanced world.<sup>7</sup>

From a counterterrorism perspective, corruption in the security services is the most egregious. For example, based on interviews in 34 African countries in 2019/2021, Afrobarometer, a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network, identified continuing patterns of distrust and high levels of perceived police corruption in more than half of African countries.<sup>8</sup> The two most common forms of police corruption are: (1) The misuse of authority by using excessive force or engaging in racial profiling; (2) Bribery involving police officers accepting money or gifts in exchange for favours or special treatment. In general terms, military organisations are better respected in Africa than their police counterparts. However, military organisations and officers are not immune from corruption. Common types of corruption undertaken by the military include misappropriation of funds, embezzlement, and maintaining fake payrolls of non-existent (ghost) soldiers. The Forbes magazine notes that:

<sup>7</sup> Barney Warf, "Geography of African Corruption" *PSU Research Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2017, pp. 20–38, <https://doi.org/10.1108/PRR-12-2016-0012> or <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/PRR-12-2016-0012/full/html> (accessed 30 June 2023).

<sup>8</sup> Pauline M. Wambua, "Police Corruption in Africa Undermines Trust, but Support for Law Enforcement Remains Strong" *Afrobarometer Dispatch* No. 56, 2 November 2015, [https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ab\\_r6\\_dispatchno56\\_police\\_corruption\\_in\\_africa.pdf](https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ab_r6_dispatchno56_police_corruption_in_africa.pdf) (accessed 30 June 2023).

In several countries, including Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Sierra Leone and Uganda, salary scams including 'ghost soldiers'- troops who do not exist but are paid nonetheless—have taken money from the public purse. In Uganda alone, ghost soldiers have cost an estimated \$324 million over the past two decades.<sup>9</sup>

A strong counterterrorism effort by government is hampered greatly if a country's citizens do not trust the nation's security services. It is only worse if citizens trust terrorists more than those police and military personnel who are sworn to protect them.

### *Poverty*

Most counter-terrorist specialists, me included, do not consider poverty to be a root cause of terrorism.<sup>10</sup> However, poverty that can't be addressed by government services can be a great terrorist recruiting enticement, particularly for the teeming population of Africa's unemployed youths. Africa faces two major poverty challenges, which are not mutually exclusive. First, poverty rates in Africa are unprecedented. According to a *Statista Report* in 2022, around 431 million of the 1.2 billion people in Africa were living in extreme poverty, with the poverty threshold at 1.90 United States dollars a day. Unfortunately, the number of poor on the continent has increased recently compared to the previous years.<sup>11</sup> This high poverty rate is exacerbated by the fact that the most vulnerable socio-economic poverty group are youth which can't find employment. "Youth bulge" is a demographic pattern term describing the situation when an overly large share of country's population is composed of children and

<sup>9</sup> Peter Guest, "Ghost Soldiers and Overpaid Jets: How the Arms Industry Fuels Corruption" in *Forbes Magazine*, 19 January 2016, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/peteguest/2016/01/19/ghost-soldiers-and-overpriced-jets-how-the-arms-industry-fuels-corruption/> (accessed 30 June 2023).

<sup>10</sup> Avrahan Jager, "Does Poverty Cause Terrorism" International Institute for Counterterrorism, IDC Herzliya, March 2018, <https://www.ict.org.il/images/Does%20Poverty%20Cause%20Terrorism.pdf> (accessed 30 June 2023).

<sup>11</sup> Saidaddin Galai, "Number of People Living in Extreme Poverty in Africa 2016–2027" *Statistica* 28 April 2023, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1228533/number-of-people-living-below-the-extreme-poverty-line-in-africa/#:~:text=In%202022%2C%20around%20431%20million,1.90%20U.S.%20dollars%20a%20day> (accessed 30 June 2023).

young adults. It also includes the high numbers of unemployed young people.<sup>12</sup> Youth bulge is a term particularly suited for the continent:

Africa has a median age of 19.7 years, the youngest population in the world. By 2050, one in three young people will live in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, there is a mismatch between this young population and available opportunities. Each year about 10 million to 12 million people enter the labour market while only about 3 million formal jobs are created.<sup>13</sup>

### *Unconstitutional Changes in Government*

Africa's statistics in relation to Unconstitutional Changes in Government are difficult to find in a standard format suitable for spreadsheet analysis. The following statistics, which are in some cases dated and not mutually exclusive, do give the reader an idea of the unprecedented number of unconstitutional changes in government on the African continent. For example, between 1961 and 1997, Africa experienced 78 unconstitutional changes of government.<sup>14</sup> "Between 1952 and 2014 there were 91 successful coups in Africa, and prior to 1990s, coups had become the main mode of political contestation and leadership change in the majority of African states."<sup>15</sup> In Africa, military coups, tenure prolongation through constitutional amendment by sitting presidents, manipulating the political system to facilitate father-to-son succession and rigging elections by incumbent governments or their refusal to concede defeat are examples

<sup>12</sup> Africa Defense Forum, "Experts Say 'Youth Bulge' Can Promote Security and Prosperity in Africa" 23 August 2022, <https://adf-magazine.com/2022/08/experts-say-youth-bulge-can-promote-security-and-prosperity-in-africa/#:~:text=The%20term%20%E2%80%9Cyouth%20bulge%E2%80%9D%20refers,youngest%20population%20in%20the%20world> (accessed 30 June 2023).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> file:///C:/Users/Russell/Downloads/No-44.-Unconstitutional-Changes-of-Government-in-Africa.pdf.

<sup>15</sup> Solomon Ayele Dersso, "Unconstitutional Changes of Government and Unconstitutional Practices in Africa" *African Politics African Peace*, World Peace Foundation, Paper No. 2, 2 June 2016, <https://sites.tufts.edu/wpf/files/2017/07/2.-UCG-Dersso-f.pdf> (accessed 30 June 2023).

of unconstitutional changes in government.<sup>16</sup> Recent trend of unconstitutional changes in government in Africa are not encouraging:

There has been a string of military takeovers in Africa in the last two years. Since August 2020, power has changed hands unconstitutionally six times in five countries: Burkina Faso (January 2022), Sudan (October 2021), Guinea (September 2021), Chad (April 2021), and Mali (August 2020 and May 2021). Two other African countries saw thwarted coup attempts in this period, Niger in March 2021 and Guinea-Bissau in January 2022, the latter of which led to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) deploying a force to the country.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the above, Burkina Faso further experienced two more coups in January and September 2022 which were not added to the above records. Constitutional changes in government give citizens a voice which can be a powerful weapon when they support their government's counterterrorism efforts. Without a voice, citizens are left with few options other than to react to what the unconstitutionally formed government tells them to do. However, one option available to citizens without a voice in their government, is to join the opposition, which in Africa's case, could be a terrorist group.

## CONCLUSION

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, voiced his particular concern over the terrorist situation in Africa. In his words, "No age, no culture, no religion, no nationality and no region are immune" to terrorism. He observed that "across the {African} continent, despair, poverty, hunger, lack of basic services, unemployment, and unconstitutional changes in government continue to lay fertile ground

<sup>16</sup> J. Shola Omotola, "Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa: What Implications for Democratic Consolidation" Discussion Paper 70, Nordiska African Institutet (NAI), Upsalla 2011, <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:478511/FULLTEXT01.pdf> (accessed 30 June 2023).

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Security Council Report, "In Hindsight: The Security Council and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa" July 2022 Monthly Forecast, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2022-07/in-hindsight-the-security-council-and-unconstitutional-changes-of-government-in-africa.php> (accessed 30 June 2023).

for the expansion of terrorist groups and the flow of fighters, funds, and weapons.”<sup>18</sup> There is no doubt that the team of counterterrorism scholars and experts assembled by Dr. Gunaratna and Dr. Okereke have succeeded in the goal for their book to contribute towards broader understanding of the challenge of terrorism. Hopefully, it is therefore my belief that their further goal of providing building blocks to effective counterterrorism interventions will be met after those who are charged building the effective counterterrorism blocks, read the book.

One note of optimism and a suggestion for the authors to consider for their next book is a study of ISIS and al Qaeda competition. The groups have different international goals and objectives that are particularly divisive in Africa. Perhaps an effective counterterrorism strategy would be to aggravate their competition!!

It is in light of the above that I consider this book useful and timely especially coming at a time of growing sustained offensives by terrorist groups in Africa despite the numerous counterterrorism interventions and renewed search for measures to mitigate the terrorist threats in the continent. Through its detailed historical sophistication, robust reflections on the trends and prognosis of the terrorist challenge in Africa, this book provides the useful addition to knowledge that will deepen understanding needed for policy and strategy on tackling terrorism in Africa.

Tempe, US  
June 2023

Brigadier General Russell Howard  
(Rtd.)

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Meeting Coverage, Op. Cit. <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15245.doc.htm> (accessed 30 June 2023).

## PREFACE

Of the daunting security challenges confronting the world since the last decade of the twentieth Century, the scourge of terrorism remains pronounced. After the Al Qaeda attacks on US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya on August 7, 1998, Africa has emerged as the new *Centre of Gravity* for global terrorism. The rise of terrorism, violence, extremism, and exclusivism espoused by Salafi-jihadi fraternity present a long-term threat to the security and stability of the world. The individuals and organisations actively recruit and radicalise vulnerable population for global, regional, national, and local terrorism.

The decision to write this book was informed by the need to embark on a foundational literature on Africa's experience of terrorism. This became imperative following the escalations of terrorism across the continent despite the adoption of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Convention for the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa since July 1999 alongside various other regional and national counterterrorism instruments. Even the various extra-continental counterterrorism partnerships with major global actors have not succeeded to curb the terrorist threats and vulnerabilities in Africa as demonstrated by the emergence and spread of both active and sleeper cells of terrorist organisations on the continent. More details about the various rampaging threat groups are delineated in the book.

Today, threat groups have demonstrated that they can reach any part of the African continent. With no Africa-wide plan either by the international or the regional community, Africa has emerged as sanctuary for the Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, and their affiliates. They have established cells, networks, and provinces across the continent. The transnational threats posed by these entities adapt to new technologies to propagate their extremist narratives and also publicising their acts of violence and terrorism. Baseline statistics from highly ranked global think-tanks on terrorism studies like the Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP) ranks various countries of the Sahel, Lake Chad basin, and Horn of Africa as major terrorism ravaged countries in the world in terms of number of incidents and fatalities. There has also been a resurgence of terrorism in the North African countries of Egypt and Libya since the Arab Spring. Both affiliates of the Al Qaeda and Islamic State have continued to launch terrorist attacks against the society and state. For the Southern Africa region previously considered largely immune from terrorism, Mozambique has since 2017 assumed centre stage of terrorism attacks. Cabo Delgado region became the most threatened jurisdiction.

This volume examines the dynamics of threat in Africa focusing on regional and country-specific analysis of terrorism. It identifies the most threatened countries on the continent. Some central trends captured in the book that aid the spread of terrorism include the existence of porous borders across the continent which are largely under-patrolled. The state syndrome characterised by weak and ineffective institutions and the proliferation of Small Arms and light Weapons (SALWs) in Africa are discussed.

The challenge of terrorism in Africa deepened. The nature of politics in several states in post-colonial Africa is often characterised by exclusion, repressions, and corruption resulting in several instances to armed conflicts and wars. The Al Qaeda attack on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in September 2001 galvanised threat groups in Africa. The outbreak of the Arab Spring in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) especially the overthrow of the Gadhafi regime in Libya by rebels backed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) further contributed to the escalation of terrorism across Africa. These developments are discussed in various chapters of the book.

Although there exist various isolated articles on terrorist threats and vulnerabilities in Africa, there scarcely a single document that conducts a dedicated interrogation of the challenge of terrorism in Africa. This book

is therefore designed to serve as a veritable handbook that adequately captures the major trends and dynamics associated with the threats of terrorism in Africa. It provides the reader with sufficient historical and empirical analysis with sufficient insights on the terrorism in Africa. The various contributors were mostly drawn from Africa-based scholars, counterterrorism experts and seasoned professionals who have informed opinions on the subject matter and who drew insights from their respective professional experiences having travelled and worked in the various countries across the continent and beyond.

These attributes significantly equipped them with the competences to participate objectively in the project. It is therefore gratifying to have Africans living and working in Africa reflect and present analysis of terrorism as it manifests on the continent. We are therefore excited that the Palgrave Macmillan, a globally ranked publisher, graciously accepted the proposal leading to the publication of this book which is evidently the most comprehensive and up-to-date study of terrorism in Africa and a fulfilment of a long sought need to contribute to understanding the challenge of terrorism in Africa in the manner that could boost counterterrorism engagements on the continent. It is our belief that the book will provides a rich background to understanding the threat landscape and further provide a vast array of information that could strengthen counterterrorism engagements in the continent in particular and the entire world in general.

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Abuja, Nigeria  
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Rohan Gunaratna  
C. Nna-Emeka Okereke

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Rohan Gunaratna  
C. Nna-Emeka Okereke

## PRAISE FOR *PALGRAVE HANDBOOK OF TERRORISM IN AFRICA*

“Terrorism and violent extremism is a twin challenge defying effective response not only in Africa but also on the global stage. For the African Union and member states, countering terrorism and violent extremism remains on top of our agenda for promoting peace and security in the continent. To this end, we are sparing no efforts to work closely with the United Nations and partners to ensure a well-coordinated, comprehensive and robust response. The role of non-state actors is even more critical.

The Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union Commission has therefore decided to mainstream the knowledge approach together with the nexus lens of security, climate change adaptation, development and governance in order to effectively tackle these threats. This is why I have accepted to provide the foreword for this publication, for it represents a good initiative by some African researchers to contribute to our efforts towards a better understanding and improved strategizing to tackle the challenge.

While we may not necessarily agree with all that is shared in the publication, nonetheless it can serve as a rich source of reference material for appreciating the complexities of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa and how to sharpen our approaches in countering same effectively. I therefore recommend this book to both practitioners and researchers.

Hopefully with continued peer review, it will help provide additional rich inputs into national, regional, continental and global levels policy making, particularly, policy improvement.”

—Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, *African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, African Union Commission Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, October 2022*

## BLURB

Africa is emerging as the global epicentre of conflict and terrorism. With the rise of religious exclusivism and extremism, Africa is the most affected continent by violence and militancy. To mitigate the extant and emerging threat, it is imperative to shift from counter terrorism and counter insurgency cooperation to collaboration and partnership. Governments and partners should build common database, exchange personnel, conduct joint training and operations, share expertise, resources, technology and experience. In addition to strengthening the kinetic and lethal capabilities, governments should work with in the religious, educational, and information domains. To counter the vicious ideologies, the religious institutions should work with the educational establishments to train, retrain and certify the religious clerics to promote moderation, toleration and coexistence. A deep knowledge and build greater understanding of the developments in the African continent, the Handbook of Terrorism in Africa is the most comprehensive and up-to-date study to guide those interested in the future of Africa.

—Rohan Gunaratna

The terrorist discourse has a complicated history in Africa. In the independence era, the definition of a terrorist represented a murky area which included liberation fighters or those challenging the state from a space that was not considered legitimate. Contemporary manifestations of terrorism in Africa, have however taken a different form. It is transnational, leaves behind a higher civilian casualty count and in some cases, incorporates an extremist ideological grounding which sometimes includes the deliberate misuse of religious texts. This book presents a timely and important collection of chapters which expands on these historical experiences and tracks the current development of the terrorist phenomenon in Africa. The inclusion of specific country case studies that represent all five regions of the continent not only illustrates the heterogeneous nature of some terrorist groups within states but also shows how, in some cases, groups are linked across various states either on the continent or beyond.

These discussions not only provide rich detail which facilitates a better understanding of these groups but presents an important reflection on the impact of terrorism on the peace and security landscape in Africa. Importantly, by unpacking the various experiences, one is also left with a better impression of how to address the problem in a way that incorporates the historical and socio-political contexts. It is increasingly clear that heavily militarized responses to terrorism yield limited results with a number of casualties on both sides. As explained in various parts of the book, causal factors represented by historical grievances, governance deficits, security vacuums and porous borders requires a more holistic approach which involves both the state and the citizenry. The transnational nature of the threat also means that regional cooperation is crucial.

As the title of this book suggests, the content contained in these pages' forms part of an important compendium or reference point for scholars, practitioners and decision-makers to consult when confronted with the complex topic of terrorism in Africa. It is a relevant and valuable contribution to the body of knowledge on one of the problems positioned at the centre of Africa's contemporary security challenges.

—Dr. Vasu Gounden (Founder and Executive Director,  
ACCORD)

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|         |                                                                    |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AA      | Anadolu Agency                                                     |
| ABM     | Ansar Beit Al Maqdis                                               |
| ACCORD  | African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes         |
| ACLED   | Armed Conflicts Location and Event Data                            |
| ACME    | African Centre for Media Excellence                                |
| ACSRT   | African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism             |
| ADC     | Democratic Alliance for Change                                     |
| ADF     | Allied Democratic Force                                            |
| ADFL    | Alliance des Forces Democratique pour la Liberation du Congo-Zaire |
| ADFs    | Ambazonia Defence Forces                                           |
| AES     | L'Alliance des Etats du Sahel                                      |
| AfDB    | African Development Bank                                           |
| AFISMA  | African-led International Support Mission to Mali                  |
| AFRICOM | Africa Command                                                     |
| AIAI    | Al Ittihad al-Islamiyya                                            |
| AL      | Arab League                                                        |
| AMISOM  | African Union Mission in Somalia                                   |
| AML/CFT | Anti-Money Laundering/Counter Financing of Terrorism               |
| AMU     | Arab Maghreb Union                                                 |
| ANC     | African National Congress                                          |
| ANDSF   | Afghan National Defence and Security Forces                        |
| ANIF    | National Agency for Financial Investigation                        |
| ANR     | Agence Nationale de Renseignement                                  |
| AQ      | Al-Qa'ida/Al Qaeda                                                 |
| AQAP    | Al Qaeda in Arabian Peninsula                                      |

|        |                                                                                |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AQEA   | Al-Qaeda in Eastern Africa                                                     |
| AQI    | Al Qaeda in Iraq                                                               |
| AQIM   | Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb                                                |
| AQN    | Al-Qaeda Network                                                               |
| AQW    | Al-Qaeda in West Africa                                                        |
| ARF    | Ambazonia Restoration Forces                                                   |
| ASL    | Ansar al Sharia Libya                                                          |
| ASS    | Alliance of Sahel States                                                       |
| ATA    | Antiterrorism Assistance                                                       |
| ATMIS  | African Union Transition Mission in Somalia                                    |
| ATPU   | Anti-Terror Police Unit                                                        |
| AU     | African Union                                                                  |
| AUCTC  | African Union Counterterrorism Centre                                          |
| AUPSC  | African Union's Peace and Security Council                                     |
| AUSSOM | African Union Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia                     |
| BBC    | British Broadcasting Corporation                                               |
| BCJI   | Bureau Central d'Investigation Judiciaire                                      |
| BH     | Boko Haram                                                                     |
| BIR    | Battalion d'Intervention Rapide                                                |
| BRSC   | Benghazi Revolutionary Shura Council                                           |
| BSIAT  | Brigade Speciale des Investigations Antiterroristes                            |
| CANIF  | Central Bank's Financial Information Analysis Commission                       |
| CAPs   | Country Action Plans                                                           |
| CAR    | Central African Republic                                                       |
| CCCPA  | Cairo International Centre for Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding in Africa |
| CDS    | Chief of Defence Staff                                                         |
| CEMAC  | Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa                              |
| CENI   | Independent National Electoral Commission                                      |
| CENTIF | Cellule Nationale de Traitement des Informations Financieres                   |
| CES    | Economic and Social Council                                                    |
| CFT    | Countering the Financing of Terrorism                                          |
| CIA    | Central Intelligence Agency                                                    |
| CIFG   | Coalition Counter ISIL Finance Group                                           |
| CILSS  | Comité Inter Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel                      |
| CISAC  | Centre for International Security and Cooperation                              |
| C-JTF  | Civilian Joint Task Force                                                      |
| CLA    | Caprivi Liberation Army                                                        |
| CMJD   | Conseil Militaire pour la Justice and Democratie                               |
| CNN    | Cable News Network                                                             |
| CPI    | Corruption Perception Index                                                    |
| CRA    | Commission of Revenue Allocation                                               |
| CSIS   | Centre for Strategic and International Studies                                 |

|          |                                                                     |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CT       | Counterterrorism                                                    |
| CTCOIN   | Counterterrorism and Counter Insurgency                             |
| CTDDH    | Chadian Convention for the Defence of Human Rights                  |
| CVE      | Counter Violent Extremism                                           |
| DDCRS    | Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Recovery and Stabilization   |
| DDRR     | Disarmament, Demobilization, Reinsertion and Repatriation programme |
| DNDF     | Djibouti National Defense Forces                                    |
| DNFBPs   | Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions                 |
| DRC      | Democratic Republic of Congo                                        |
| DRR      | Deradicalisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration                  |
| DS&T     | Directorate of Science and Technology                               |
| DSS      | Department of State Services (Nigeria)                              |
| DW       | Deutsche Welle                                                      |
| EAF      | Egyptian Armed Forces                                               |
| EASO     | European Asylum Support Office                                      |
| ECCAS    | Economic Community of Central African States                        |
| ECFR EU  | European Council on Foreign Relation – European Union               |
| ECOWAS   | Economic Community of West African States                           |
| EIJ      | Egyptian Islamic Jihad                                              |
| ENDF     | Ethiopia National Defense Forces                                    |
| EO       | Executive Order                                                     |
| ESAAMLAG | East and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group                |
| ESF      | ECOWAS Standby Force                                                |
| ESO      | External Security Organisation                                      |
| EU       | European Union                                                      |
| EUCAP    | European Union Capacity Building Mission in Mali                    |
| EUCOM    | European Command                                                    |
| EUTM     | European Union Training Mission                                     |
| FAM      | Forces Armées du Mali/Malian Armed Forces                           |
| FARDC    | Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo                |
| FATF     | Financial Action Task Force                                         |
| FBI      | Federal Bureau of Investigations                                    |
| FBTO     | Foreign-Based Terrorist Organisation                                |
| FES      | Friedrich Ebert Stiftung                                            |
| FG-G5S   | G5 Sahel Joint Force                                                |
| FIB      | Force Intervention Brigade                                          |
| FIDH     | International Federation of Human Rights                            |
| FIS      | Islamic Salvation Front                                             |
| FIU      | Financial Intelligence Unit                                         |
| FL       | Fusion Liaison Unit                                                 |
| FLA      | Front de Liberation de l’Azawad                                     |

|         |                                                                             |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| FLEC    | Cabinda Enclave Liberation Front                                            |
| FPLC    | Patriotic Forces for the Liberation of Congo                                |
| FSB     | Federal Security Service                                                    |
| FSI     | Fragile States Index                                                        |
| FTF     | Foreign Terrorist Fighters                                                  |
| FTO     | Foreign Terrorist Organisation                                              |
| G7      | Group 7                                                                     |
| GABAC   | Groupe d'Action contre le Blanchiment d'Argent en Afrique Centrale          |
| GATIA   | Le Groupe d'Autodéfense Touareg Imghad et Allies                            |
| GCTF    | Global Counterterrorism Forum                                               |
| GDP     | Gross Domestic Product                                                      |
| GIABA   | Groupe d'Action contre le Blanchiment d'Argent en Afrique de l'Ouest        |
| GICM    | Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group                                            |
| GNA     | Government of National Accord                                               |
| GNA-MOI | Government of National Accord—Ministry of Interior                          |
| GNC     | General National Congress                                                   |
| GPI     | Global Peace Index                                                          |
| GPML    | Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism                            |
| GSIGN   | Groupe de Sécurité et d'Intervention de la Gendarmerie Nationale            |
| GSPC    | Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat                                     |
| GTI     | Global Terrorism Index                                                      |
| HASM    | Haraket Saw'aid Misr                                                        |
| HCUA    | Le Haut Conseil Pour l'Unité de l'Azawad                                    |
| HDI     | Human Development Index                                                     |
| HIPC    | Highly Indebted Poor Countries                                              |
| HRW     | Human Rights Watch                                                          |
| HSM     | Harakat Al Shabaab al Mujahidin                                             |
| HUMINT  | Human Intelligence                                                          |
| ICAO    | Civil Aviation Organization                                                 |
| ICC     | International Criminal Court                                                |
| ICG     | International Crisis Group                                                  |
| ICGLR   | International Conference on the Great Lakes Region                          |
| ICSR    | International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence |
| ICT     | Information and Communication Technology                                    |
| ICU     | Islamic Courts Union                                                        |
| ICWA    | Indian Council of World Affairs                                             |
| IDP     | Internally Displaced People                                                 |
| IEDs    | Improvised Explosive Devices                                                |
| IEP     | Institute of Peace and Economics                                            |

|          |                                                                              |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IGAD     | Inter-Governmental Authority on Development                                  |
| IGASOM   | Inter-Governmental Authority on Development Peace Support Mission in Somalia |
| IJR      | The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation                                 |
| IMA      | Islamic Movement of Azawad                                                   |
| IMCTC    | Islamic Military Counterterrorism Coalition                                  |
| INGOs    | International Non-Governmental Organisations                                 |
| INL      | Law Enforcement Affairs                                                      |
| INTERPOL | International Police                                                         |
| IOM      | International Organisation of Migrations                                     |
| IPK      | Islamic Party of Kenya                                                       |
| I-RECKE  | Interregional Knowledge Exchange in Early Warning and Conflict Prevention    |
| IRIS     | Institut de Relations Internationale et Strategique                          |
| IRISAD   | Ansar ul-Islam lil-Ichadwal Jihad                                            |
| IS       | Islamic State                                                                |
| ISCAP    | Islamic State of Central African Province                                    |
| ISGDPs   | Islamic State General Directorate of Provinces                               |
| ISGS     | Islamic State in the Greater Sahara                                          |
| ISIL     | Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant                                         |
| ISIS     | Islamic State of Syria and Iraq                                              |
| ISIS-GS  | ISIS in the Greater Sahara                                                   |
| ISIS-WA  | ISIS-West Africa                                                             |
| ISS      | Islamic State in Somalia                                                     |
| ISWAP    | Islamic State of West Africa Province                                        |
| JAS      | Jama'atu Ahlis-Sunnah Ladda'Awati Wal-Jihad                                  |
| JF       | Joint Force                                                                  |
| JI       | Jema'ah al Islamiyah /al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya                                 |
| JNIM     | Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wa al-Muslimeen                                      |
| KDF      | Kenya Defense Forces                                                         |
| KST      | Kivu Security Tracker                                                        |
| LCBC     | Lake Chad Basin Commission                                                   |
| LIFG     | Libya Islamic Fighting Group                                                 |
| LNA      | Libyan National Army                                                         |
| LPA      | Libya Political Agreement                                                    |
| LUCHA    | Lutte pour le Changement                                                     |
| MAA      | Mouvement Arabe de l'Azawad                                                  |
| MAGO     | Muslims Against Global Oppression                                            |
| MDSs     | Ministries, Departments and Agencies                                         |
| MENA     | Middle East and North Africa                                                 |
| MENAFATF | Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force                     |
| MEND     | Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta                             |
| MER      | Mutual Evaluation Report                                                     |

|         |                                                                 |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| MIATE   | Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Traditional Education           |
| MIDAS   | Migration Information Data Analysis System                      |
| MINUSMA | Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali       |
| MJSOR   | Misrata Joint Security Operations Room                          |
| ML/TF   | Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing                        |
| MLC     | Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo                           |
| MLF     | Macina Liberation Front                                         |
| MNJTF   | Multinational Joint Task Force                                  |
| MNLA    | National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad                  |
| MNS     | Ministry of National Security (Ghana)                           |
| MOJWA   | Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa                   |
| MPLA    | Movement for the Liberation of Angola                           |
| MSR     | Main Supply Routes                                              |
| MUJAO   | Movement for Tawhid (Unity) and Jihad in West Africa            |
| MYC     | Muslim Youth Centre                                             |
| NAF     | Nigerien Armed Forces                                           |
| NAI     | Nordiska Africain Institutet                                    |
| NATO    | North Atlantic Treaty Organisation                              |
| NCTC    | National Counter Terrorism Centre                               |
| NGO     | Non-Governmental Organizations                                  |
| NHDI    | National Human Development Initiative                           |
| NISA    | National Intelligence and Security Agency                       |
| NPFL    | National Patriotic Front of Liberia                             |
| NRA     | National Risk Assessment                                        |
| NSAGs   | Non-State Armed Groups                                          |
| OCHA    | Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs                 |
| OECD    | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development           |
| OPEC    | Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries                   |
| OPSC    | Operation Safe Corridor                                         |
| ORBAT   | Order of Battle                                                 |
| P3S     | Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel             |
| PAGAD   | People Against Gangsterism and Drugs                            |
| PBIEDs  | Person-Born Improvised Explosive Devices                        |
| PERLT   | Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism Leading to Terrorism    |
| PFLP-GC | Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command   |
| PIJ     | Palestinian Islamic Jihad                                       |
| PISCES  | Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System |
| PLO     | Palestinian Liberation Organization                             |
| PMC     | Private Military Contractors                                    |
| PMPF    | Puntland Maritime Police Force                                  |

|           |                                                                                 |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| POCDATARA | Protection of Constitutional Democracy Against Terrorist and Related Activities |
| PSA       | Parti Solidarite Africaine                                                      |
| PSF       | Puntland Security Forces                                                        |
| PSI       | Pan Sahel Initiative                                                            |
| PUDEMO    | People's United Democratic Movement                                             |
| PUS       | Plan d'Urgence pour le Sahel                                                    |
| RCC       | Revolutionary Command Council                                                   |
| REC       | Regional Economic Communities                                                   |
| RFI       | Rift Valley Institute                                                           |
| RIFU      | Regional Intelligence Fusion Unit                                               |
| RPF       | Rwanda Patriotic Front                                                          |
| RPGs      | Rocket Propelled Grenades                                                       |
| RUF       | Revolutionary United Front                                                      |
| SADC      | Southern African Development Community                                          |
| SADC      | Southern African Development Community                                          |
| SADR      | Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic                                               |
| SALWs     | Small Arms and Light Weapons                                                    |
| SAPS      | South African Police Service                                                    |
| SBB       | Signers in Blood Battalion                                                      |
| SCCRC     | Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission                                       |
| SDF       | Syrian Democratic Forces                                                        |
| SDGT      | Specially Designated Global Terrorists                                          |
| SGPC      | Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat                                         |
| SIPRI     | Stockholm International Peace Research Institute                                |
| SLOC      | Sea Line of Communication                                                       |
| SNA       | Somali National Army                                                            |
| SNM       | Somali National Movement                                                        |
| SPU       | Special Protection Unit                                                         |
| SSRC      | Social Science Research Council                                                 |
| SSS       | Sahel-Saharan Strip                                                             |
| SVBIED    | Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device                               |
| SVEST     | Suicide Vest                                                                    |
| SWAPO     | South West Africa Peoples' organization                                         |
| SWAYOCO   | Swaziland Youth Congress                                                        |
| TAR       | Traditional African Religion                                                    |
| TCC       | Troop Contributing Country                                                      |
| TCRST     | Tunisian Center for Research and Studies on Terrorism                           |
| TFG       | Transitional Federal Government                                                 |
| TSCTI     | Trans- Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative                                      |
| TSCTP     | Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership                                       |
| TTF       | Takuba Task Force                                                               |
| TTP       | Tactics, Techniques and Procedures                                              |

## I ABBREVIATIONS

|         |                                                                                      |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TWJWA   | al-Tawih Wal-Jihad in West Africa                                                    |
| UAE     | United Arab Emirate                                                                  |
| UEMOA   | Union Economique et Monétaire l'Ouest Africaine                                      |
| UK      | United Kingdom                                                                       |
| UN-CTED | United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism<br>Committee Executive Directorate |
| UNDP    | United Nations Development Programme                                                 |
| UNFPA   | United Nations Population Fund                                                       |
| UNHCR   | United Nations High Commission for Refugees                                          |
| UNITA   | Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola                                  |
| UNOC    | United Nations Operation in the Congo                                                |
| UNOCA   | United Nations Regional Office in Central Africa                                     |
| UNOCHA  | United Nations Office for Coordination Humanitarian Affairs                          |
| UNODC   | United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime                                            |
| UNOWAS  | United Nations Office for West Africa and the ae                                     |
| UNSC    | United Nations Security Council                                                      |
| UNSMIL  | United Nations Support Mission in Libya                                              |
| US/USA  | United States of America                                                             |
| UTA     | Union de Transport Aeriens                                                           |
| VBIED   | Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device                                            |
| VDP     | Defence of the Fatherland                                                            |
| WACL    | West African Ceramics Limited                                                        |
| WAEMU   | West African Monetary Union                                                          |
| WAM     | Weapons and Ammunitions Management                                                   |
| WANEP   | West African Network for Peacebuilding                                               |
| WB      | World Bank                                                                           |
| WTC     | World Trade Centre                                                                   |

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